

which forms the proper surface of the country as far as Merve. The bank of the Moorghaub upon which we halted each night, was thickly fringed with Tamarisk bushes. The water of the river was very muddy, flowing ly with eddies at the rate of one and a quarter mile per hour, and having many dangerous quicksands. We very nearly lost a man who rode his horses a little way in to drink. Though we met no tents we saw vast flocks of sheep which are sent thus far from Merve to pasture with a few shepherds and dogs. We carried chopped straw upon our horses, being accustomed to it, but there was no want of grass on the way for the native horses of our fellow travellers who had not gone to this expense. The road is by no means difficult abounding as it does in grass, wood and water, and it was evidently well travelled formerly.

Our third march brought us to a very fine caravansary of burned bricks, containing accommodation for many men and beasts, which is attributed to Abdoolah Khan of Bokhara a philanthropist who has the credit of all good works in these countries, as Alle Merdun Khan does in Affghanistan. Close to it is a mausoleum sacred to the memory of some Imaum forgotten.

Despatch from Lieut. H. Bigge, Assistant Agent, detached to the Naga Hills, to Capt. Jenkins, Agent Governor General, N.E. Frontier, communicated from the Political Secretariat of India to the Secretary to the Asiatic Society.

I have the honor to report my arrival at this Post, (Demalpore) where I am happy to state large supplies of grain, &c. &c., are now daily arriving for the use of the troops about to accompany me to the Naga hills.

Having been prevented, from the total want of population on the road between Rangalao Ghur and Kasirangah, of Mehal Morung, from passing up that line of country, I crossed to the north bank of the Burrampooter at Bishnath, and passing through the villages of Baghmaree, Rangsalli, Goopore, and Kolah Barri in the Luckimpore district, crossed the Maguli Island to Dehingeahgong, and so through Deergong to Cacharri Hath, where I fell in with the detachment of the Assam Lt. Inf. which Captain Hannay had sent off, to await my orders at Nogorah.

From Cacharri Hath I passed to the Dhunseri river at Golah ghaut, where I was glad to find that the greatest portion of the supplies of rice, &c. dispatched by me from Nogong, had all arrived safely, and

that a large portion had been sent forward; the remainder was speedily transferred to smaller boats, and is now close at hand, having been brought by water to a small river called Daopani, one march on this side Hir Pathor, (Bor Phalong of Captain Pemberton's maps) and from whence a path through the forests had been previously cleared to the nearest point to this.

From a demi-official letter, received at Golah ghaut from Captain Han-
nay, I was led to believe that large supplies had been collected for the use of his detachment at Nagorah, but in this there must have been some mistake, as the Jemadar in command informs me, that, but very little rice has been collected, and not much more may be expected at present.

Never having previously relied on any other arrangements than those I made when at Nogong, but little, if any delay will result from this circumstance; and the detachment was ordered to leave Nagorah on the 1st instant at latest, and will, probably, should the heavy rains we have had not detain them, arrive here on the 5th or 6th instant.

I remained 3 or 4 days at Golah ghaut, superintending my arrangements, and was present at a sort of fair, held there, on the arrival of a fleet of boats, laden with cotton from the Lotah Nagah Hills on the Dogong river, which falls into the Dhunsini a short way above; about 70 of the Nagas came down, with two of their sykeats, many of them understanding the Assamese language, and were engaged the whole day in bartering their cotton, for salt, dried fish, dogs, fowls, and ducks, with a few brass rings, of which they seem very fond, suspending them one below the other from holes bored in the ear.

The general average of prices was about

1 Seer of Salt	4 to 5 of Cotton.
1 Dog	3 (they eat this animal.)
1 Fowl or Duck.....	1½ to 2.

On visiting their camp a little above the ghaut, I found several of them lying on the ground, intoxicated from the effects of a most disgusting sort of spirituous liquor they make from rice, and which they drink hot; they are a very sullen race, and it was with some difficulty I could get any replies to the few questions I asked them.

Regarding the madder, with which the hair on their spears was dyed, I tried a long time to gain some correct information, but in vain, the Sykeah told me, they had none in their own hills, but what they used was brought to them by the *Abor Nagas*, a tribe I have not yet heard of, but believe it will be found to mean the Amgamees, of whom they seemed to stand much in dread, and from whom they said they received

a large portion of the cotton, they brought down for sale, acting, it would appear from this, more as merchants than the actual growers.

The country of these Abors, they described as being due south from their hills, but they said distant 2 months' journey, an obvious error, as such a distance would take them far to the south of Munnipore. As the name of this tribe was also made use of by the Rengmah Nagas (inhabiting the hill between those of the makers of Nagong and the Dhunsiri) I may hereafter be able perhaps to make myself better acquainted with their position, though this tribe also seem to fear them fully as much as the Lotahs.

In appearance, the Lotah Nagas are of a short, though stout build, and some of them by no means ill-looking; they wear no more clothing than their brethren of other parts, and are alike filthy in their persons and habits, and have a pompous mode of addressing one, which might in some cases be interpreted as insolent. I shewed them some clasp knives, I took down with me for the purpose, at which they laughed, and sneeringly remarked, 'of what use were they? Naga requires only a *dhan*, and his spears; such things are of no use or value to us:' before quitting this race, I may as well observe that they carry away about 12 or 1,300 maunds of salt annually, in exchange for cotton, so that their trade may be deemed equal to near 10,000 mds. of cotton in all.

There are several merchants, chiefly Kyahs, from Marwar, established at Golah ghaut, besides Musselmans from Goalpara, but so little trade is there for any thing besides cotton, that I was unable to procure a brass pot of any sort; woollens and every other descriptions of cloth are alike unsought for, their stock in trade being composed entirely of salt.

A large quantity of iron being found and manufactured in the neighborhood of Golah ghaut, the Nagas obtain their *dhans* chiefly from hence, the price of which appeared to me very high, being 4 as. each, and the iron fetching as much as 8 Rs. per maund, unwrought; the quantity annually manufactured, I was unable to ascertain.

Leaving Golah ghaut in company with Mr. Herring who had joined me from Bishnath, by appointment, we passed through a long belt of dense forest to the Nambur Nuddie, about 10 miles, for the purpose of visiting together the salt springs, and lime stone rocks, which are found on its banks. The camp was formed for the night on a small sand bank, round which the river ran, and in the centre of which was the salt spring, or, called by the natives, on account of the heat, the *Jucung poong* or hot springs.

The water from this spring is beautifully clear, and of a temperature of $110\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ in the well, to $11\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ in the sand, as determined by most accurate observation, from a first rate thermometer obtained from London, for such purposes:—this was at 3h. 33m. P. M., the temperature of the air being $59\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ at the time, repeating the observations the next morning at 7. A. M. when the atmosphere was at 43° . I found no difference in the temperature of the water.

The water when drank appeared to me to contain but very little salt, and flavored rather of sulphur than any thing else; the spring is a very abundant one, and would nearly suffice to turn a water wheel, but is so little elevated above the level rain, that a rise of only two feet would be sufficient to swamp it, while from the water marks on the trees, it was obvious that the whole was submerged in the rains from 7 to 8 feet.

The neighbourhood of the spring was every where trodden down by elephants, buffaloes, deer, &c. which animals resort there in great numbers to drink the waters, through my own elephant, ponies, &c. refused to taste it; in the centre of the spring there is a depth of about 1 foot of water, below which the feet or hand might easily be passed through a thin bed of sand, composed entirely of quartz to a bed of large pebbles of a similar nature, and it was resting the thermometer on the latter bed that the greatest heat $113\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ was obtained.

This spring is situated about $1\frac{1}{2}$ or $3\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile from the Dhunsiri, but in spite of this, I fear the returns would not be worth any persons while establishing a manufactory of salt, as he must leave the place in May, and could not expect to return till November, which would be the earliest date at which these forests could become habitable after the rains.

I boiled a large quantity of water, about 2 gallons, till it was reduced to $\frac{2}{4}$ of a quart, which was afterwards evaporated at Bor Pathor, but not more than a tea-spoon full of salt was obtained, a very poor return, I should suppose, though the salt was to the taste extremely good.

The morning after I reached this spring, as the distance to Bor Pathor, was but short, Mr. Herring and myself proceeded through the forest, along the banks of the Nambur Nuddie, to visit the other springs, and also the limestone beds, distant by the watch $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, in a S. W. direction. A short way below the springs, in a small stream, running from them, on which the water was pleasantly warm. Mr. Herring's discovered some trees, which struck us both as being tea, though I am uncertain as to the fact, but have sent specimens of the leaves, flowers, and fruits, through Capt. Vetch, to be examined by Dr. Arnott and Mr.

Watkins, as in the event of their proving genuine, would greatly enhance the value of the springs and quarries.

The salt springs which are 3 in number are situated 250 yards to the north of the Nambur Nuddie, in a small circular space, surrounded by forest, but are neither so hot or apparently so strong of brine as that we first saw. The temperature being as follows.

In the shade,	64° air.
Large spring,	95° water.
Smaller one,	98°

The difference between the larger and smaller springs being doubtless caused by a small stream of water flowing into it.

In the time of the Assam Rajahs, it appears, these salt springs were regularly worked, and the water dammed up for the purpose, as the remains of the parts which formed the dams are visible in the stream, which falls into the well, as also in that which carries off the water.

The limestone, of which I send specimens, is found in the bed of the Nambur Nuddie, close to the salt spring, where it appears at the clay; as also in the small stream above mentioned, which runs through the larger spring about 200 yards further up, and beyond which, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ a mile, is found pipe-clay, some detached pieces of which I saw, but had not time, on a second visit to these wells, to reach the beds.

It is a curious fact perhaps, that a large quantity of small fish, inhabit the larger of these wells, and it was a subject of much regret, that I was unable to procure any, as specimens, as it could not but have been satisfactory to ascertain, what description of fish these were, which delighted in such a temperature and in such water.

The only drawback to the effectually working these spring, and lime-beds, for a certain number of months during the year, appears to be the want of conveyance to the Dhunsiri river, and I think it might be worth the experiment of making an outlay, on the part of Government, of 2 or 300 rupees to effect the same, either by cutting a road through the forest, or by erecting *Batahs* (or dams) in the river, so as to allow of its becoming navigable for small boats, which might easily be dragged over the slight falls when empty, and as easily taken down when laden, a practice much in use on the Dying river of Cachar, as you have had opportunity of observing.

Should such a proposition meet with the approbation of Government, I believe Mr. Herring would be happy to devote a considerable degree of attention and minor expense, so as to render these wells far more valuable than they otherwise can become, by sinking shafts at a little

distance from the present springs, with a view of procuring a purer supply of salt water, for the purposes of manufacture, and would also work the lime stone in conjunction with the salt, but without this aid, situated as these productions are, in the midst of an uninhabited forest, and not within 8 miles of any population, I fear there is not inducement, sufficient to render it worth his while attempting it, or incurring the expense which must necessarily attend such an undertaking.

I may here observe that these forests abound with the finest *Nahor Trees* I have ever seen, a wood, which, though from its weight and extreme hardness, is perhaps not adapted for all purposes, is most admirably so for beams, posts, &c. where great strength and durability is required, and might be very advantageously used in all Government buildings where obtainable.

I left Bar Pathor after seeing all my supplies well off in boats on the 28th ultimo, reaching the mouth of the Duopani Nuddi on that day, the Hurrioghan Mookh on the 29th, the Debopani Mookh on the 30th, and arriving here on the afternoon of the 31st, the road running along the line of the Dhunsiri, though straightened in many of the turnings for 38 miles through the densest forests, the last 10 miles being up the bed of the Dhunsiri itself.

Through all the desolate jungles that I have hitherto travelled, and they are not a few, I never met with one so completely abandoned by life as this; no animal of any kind was seen, nor was a bird heard from morning till night, the death-like silence being only broken by the heavy fall of the *Otengah* fruit, these trees composing the entire forest or nearly so. The marks of the river left on the trees was every where visible from 1 to 9 feet in height, forbidding all idea of making this line, that of communication with this post, save during the cold season, and that too at a late period from the number of impassable swamps, which everywhere intervene, and render all attempts at rendering the present path any shorter, or much more practicable than it is, alike unavailing.

Fodder for cattle, especially elephants, is remarkably scarce, my men finding the greatest difficulty in obtaining the smallest supply, and that too of a very poor description.

The vast number of trees, which are sunk in the river and on the sands, render the navigation for boats almost impossible, beyond the Daopani, unless perhaps during the rains, and even then, it is not without the greatest care, that boats can proceed, either up, or still more so, down the river; a very large one last year was swamped close to Bor Pathor, while passing down empty, being entangled in a large tree, one of

the men being drowned, and the rest with difficulty saved, the boat being lost.

Such being the state of the country on the North side, it will be necessary to open a better communication, than at present exists towards Mohong Dezoah, and for that purpose, I intend engaging a large number of coolies, if possible, from Tuli Ram Senaputti's country, to construct a regular road from Mohong Dezoah to this part, unless a better site can be shortly discovered, clearing away the jungle, and if he will agree to it, locating 10 or 15 families of Meekirs, at this place who shall be kept up for the purpose of clearing the roads, &c. for the future.

Should he agree, I shall further propose, that the revenue of these persons shall be for the present defrayed by government, either by a direct payment to the ryotts themselves, of the amount demandable from them by the Senaputti, or in case of their objecting, a trifle more, or by crediting him that amount from the annual tribute paid by him to government in ivory.

Should I be able during my present expedition to reduce the Nagah chiefs to any state of order, it would be desirable further, to try and settle a few of these men in the neighbourhood, on the East bank of the Dhunsiri, allowing them to occupy any lands they choose, exempt entirely from all rent or taxation, until such time as matters shall be so changed, as to seem to call for fresh arrangements; as however this is mere speculation, I shall pursue it no further at present.

While at Bar Pathor I was visited, on invitation, by the Phokun or chief of the Rengmah tribe of Nagas before mentioned, who complained of the loss he had sustained, together with his tribe, by the abolition of the former establishment of *Kutkees*, or, I might call them, supercargoes, who were formerly the medium of communication between this race and the merchants, in all their dealings, through whom all orders, and communications to the Nagas passed, begging their restoration, together with the small quantity of lands, &c. which these persons enjoyed as a remuneration for their services.

From the short conversation I had with the Phokun, he was anxious not to stay, on account of some religious festival which commenced 2 days afterwards; he stated that the lands and pykes were bestowed on his grandfather and father, for services done in the time of the insurrection of the Muttacks or Moamarriah tribe, in preserving the property, &c. of the then Bor Gohain of Assam; that he had applied to Mr. Scott, on the subject, at Gowhattee in person, and had received assurance that his claims should be considered as good, but that now the whole lands have been

taxed, the *kutkees* abolished, and that his authority and rank have fallen so low, that scarcely his own tribe acknowledge him.

I regret that I am not acquainted with the reasons, on which the arrangements now in force were adopted, sufficiently, to enable me to enter into a full detail of the case, but you may be able from what I have stated, to refer to the documents, I have now with me, and form an opinion, whether on payment of a small tribute in ivory, which they are, I was informed ready, and willing to pay, the remission to the extent required might not safely be effected.

The Phokun further expressed a desire to be taken under protection from the attacks of the Lotah tribe of Nagas, with whom there has been an enmity existing for a long time, and he asserts, though I fear without any direct proof (he promised to produce witnesses before me at this place to depose to the fact), of the village called Beloo, not far from Mohong Dezo-oah, having been attacked by a party of Lotahs from the village of Tagdie, last year, and one man and a child murdered. On this subject I shall again address you when the evidence shall have been adduced, but may observe that the trade of the Lotah Nagas being completely in the power of the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Seelpore, some injunctions might be conveyed to the Naga Hazarri of that tribe holding him responsible for any repetition of such acts.

Looking at the map of this country, you may observe that the inclination of the lime formation of the Nambur Nuddie will exactly, or within a trifle, correct the points at which it has also been found at the Falls of the Jumoonah, near Mohong Dezo-oah at Langolar, spelt 'Lowrung' in Captain Pemberton's Map on the Kopili, and so on towards Sylhet, not improbably forming one long line of similar formation throughout.

Note on the Brahooees.—By CAPT. HART, Bombay Army.

These tribes are the descendants of 'Braho,' a Bulooche, who emigrated, about the second century of the Hejira from Aleppo to Mukran: some years after his countrymen had settled there, he fixed his abode at Koliva, a few days journey to the westward of Kelot which city was then inhabited by the Tajuks, over whom ruled a Hakim from Herat, the seat of sovereignty. These Tajuks were a turbulent and overbearing race, noted for their hatred to the yoke of Herat. Several of their Hakims had been slain in popular commotions, and at length the part was considered of such danger, that a newly appointed governor